

THE  
**pulse**  
MAGAZINE

SPECIAL FEATURE  
**Aging in America**  
*A focus on geriatrics at Oakland University*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Nursing practices,  
education and research

Progressive solutions

Improving quality of life

Adult care degree track



## Prepared for the challenge



As the baby boomer generation receives its AARP membership cards and the number of graying Americans continues to increase in record numbers, focusing on how we — as a nation and as nurses — can provide the best care for this growing population is a challenge we must face. And we must face it quickly, innovatively and effectively.

With a nursing shortage, aging RNs, retiring nursing faculty, hefty Medicaid expenses, fewer hospital beds, reduced hospital stays and co-morbid chronic conditions, schools of nursing are under more pressure than ever to incorporate geriatric education into traditional training while at the same time offering more research and specializations.

This is a challenge Oakland University's School of Nursing is facing head on. With a champion visionary on our team, OU's SON is approaching the geriatric crisis with a focus on practices, research and education.

The best geriatric nursing practices have been shown to improve the care processes and outcomes of older patients. However, dispensing this knowledge into mainstream nursing has been slow (Mion, 2003). The Alliance for Aging Research reported in 2002 that there were 6,000 Americans turning 65 daily and that by the year 2012, that number will increase to nearly 10,000 people a day. Couple the sheer numbers of the baby boomer generation with the increase in life expectancy, which is around 78 years old today with many seniors living well into their 80s, and you have an increased likelihood for chronic medical conditions. In addition, the needs of older, acutely ill patients are much more complex than those of other age groups.

Without question, nurses need to be better educated on the needs of the geriatric population. The future health of millions of baby boomers depends upon it. These boomers will impact long-term care facilities (which currently cope with a 100 percent turnover rate of nurse aides) and nursing homes and hospitals — and staff and educators, as well.

By the year 2010, more than 40 percent of existing RNs will be over 50 years old and more likely to sustain back, neck or foot injuries. Additionally, the graying of America is impacting nursing faculty, which is a big contributor to the nursing shortage.

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, nearly 40 percent of nursing schools indicated that lack of advance-degreed faculty was the cause for turning away thousands of qualified students from their nursing programs. Doctoral-degreed nurses only make up a small percentage of nurses — 0.6 percent of the nursing profession. MSNs make up only 9.6 percent of the general nurse population. Doctoral-prepared faculty members average 50.4 years old.

The challenges are many — for our geriatric population and the rest of society. This inaugural issue of *The Pulse* features the integrated and multi-pronged approach OU's School of Nursing is taking to help ensure the nursing profession is fully equipped for today's challenges and prepared for the future.

Linda Thompson Adams  
Dean, OU School of Nursing



FALL 2008

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## SON faculty accomplishments

**Linda Thompson Adams**, dean, published two books: *Losing Control: Loving a Black Child with Bipolar Disorder* and *Nurse Executive: The Purpose, Process, and Personnel of Management*. She was also named Diversity Business Leader by *Corp! Magazine*.

**Andrea Bittinger**, admissions coordinator, OU-Beaumont graduate program of nurse anesthesia, was honored as a Nightingale Award nominee. She also organized a CRNA career information session, a "Kids at Work" day at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak and a career exploration experience in Utica. She published an article in the *MANA Connector Magazine*. Her work also was published in six additional publications.

**Karen Dunn**, associate professor, nursing, published three articles in the following publications: *International Journal of Older People Nursing*; *Holistic Nursing Practice*; and *Journal of Holistic Nursing*, with **Cheryl Riley-Doucet**, assistant professor, nursing.

**Anne Hranchook**, clinical coordinator, OU-Beaumont graduate program of nurse anesthesia, served as faculty adviser for the class of 2010 anesthesia interns, developed a student research symposium and presented a CRNA faculty development session on anesthesia program updates and national trends.

**Frances Jackson**, director, doctor of nursing practice program, co-authored a book chapter on the doctor of nursing practice, presented in Ireland and Hong Kong, and received a grant to study HIV/AIDS and young African American women.

**Lisa Mileto**, program director, OU-Beaumont graduate program of nurse anesthesia, was honored as a Nightingale Award nominee. During the 2007-08 academic year, she also presented at the 41st Annual Michigan Health Facilities Planning Seminar, the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Assembly of School Faculty, the Kentucky Association of Nurse Anesthetists and the Texas Association of Nurse Anesthetists. She completed two research studies and received an HRSA Nurse Anesthetists Traineeship grant. She also served as contributing editor for the *International Journal of Student Nurse Anesthetists*.

**Kathryn Swendner**, clinical coordinator, OU-Beaumont graduate program of nurse anesthesia, was named a Member of the NBCRNA Certification Examination Committee.

## A gift that gives back

The United States faces a crisis in health care. An estimated 125,000 nursing positions are vacant nationwide. That number is projected to rise to 1 million in the next decade. Fewer nurses will result in fewer health care options and a lower quality of service. OU's School of Nursing is taking steps to aggressively address this problem. In partnership with local health care organizations, we actively recruit faculty and students for our programs. Applications and admissions have risen slightly, but much more can be done to ease the current and future nursing shortage. The development of scholarships, and distinctive campus, online and satellite programs will serve as an important catalyst for future growth. This also will provide important incentives in attracting, retaining and graduating students into the ranks of professional nursing.

Please consider a gift to the School of Nursing. For more information about gift opportunities to the School of Nursing, please contact Colette O'Connor at (248) 370-4070 or [oconnor@oakland.edu](mailto:oconnor@oakland.edu).

### SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

For sponsorship information and opportunities in future issues of *The Pulse*, please contact Colette O'Connor at (248) 370-4070 or [oconnor@oakland.edu](mailto:oconnor@oakland.edu).

### CORRESPONDENCE

Send correspondence about this issue and future issues to:

Amy Johnson  
School of Nursing  
447 O'Dowd Hall  
Oakland University  
2200 North Squirrel Road  
Rochester, Michigan 48309-4401

#### Executive Staff

Linda Thompson Adams, dean  
Sherry Abernathy, assistant dean  
Pam Marin, assistant dean  
Diane M. Norris, associate dean  
Colette O'Connor, director of development

#### Editorial Staff

Claudette Zolkowski, editor  
Frank Fisher, art director  
Amy Johnson, project manager  
Kelly Garnett, photo coordinator  
Rick Smith, photographer

#### Writers:

Sandra Beckwith  
Mary Gunderson-Switzer  
Karen Hildebrandt  
Alice Rhein  
Susan Thwing-McHale

# A Message from the Provost

At Oakland University we are focused on creating opportunities for growth in our region and state. One of Michigan's greatest challenges right now is a significant need for more qualified health care workers — nurses, therapists, researchers, physicians and more. Through Oakland's exemplary educational programs and together with partners like Oakland County and the Oakland Medical Initiative, we will help fill an estimated 50,000 new jobs in health care and life sciences over the next 10 years.

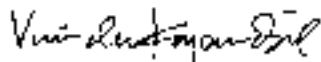
Oakland has a strong tradition of excellence in educating future health care providers. Our School of Nursing, School of Health Sciences, Eye Research Institute and Center for Biological Research are nationally recognized by the medical education and research communities. And *U.S. News and World Report* ranks the Oakland University/Beaumont Graduate program of Nurse Anesthesia 11th in the United States.

But that's not all. The Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine, slated to open in 2010 pending LCME and NCA certification, will train a new kind of doctor who can balance medical expertise with the ability to listen, to communicate effectively and to be kind and compassionate. We will teach the basic sciences and will thread that essential instruction throughout four years of hands-on clinical experience. And we will create a medical learning community, with Beaumont doctors serving as life-long learning role models for their students.

The medical school also will create thousands of new jobs and revenue for the region — an estimated \$1 billion annually in economic impact once it is fully operational. It will serve as the catalyst for new, health care-related business ventures and inspire the best and brightest students in the field to remain in Michigan.

In addition, Oakland will build a 157,300-square-foot building to house the School of Nursing and School of Health Sciences. Funded partially by the State of Michigan, the new facility will bring together the multi-disciplinary talent and expertise of academic and clinical faculty to train much-needed health care providers. Students will benefit from the addition of simulation labs and clinics configured to specific health care disciplines that reflect modern facilities found in hospitals.

Oakland University is proud to be an integral part of these initiatives, and a key contributor to the solution to Michigan's health care education needs.



Virinder K. Moudgil  
Senior Vice President for  
Academic Affairs and Provost



# caring for the aged

*OU School of Nursing makes strides in geriatric nursing practices, education and research*

*By Karen Hildebrandt*



**T**his year, the first of America's 78 million baby boomers will reach 62, considered by many to be the age when an adult officially becomes a senior citizen. Baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1960, represent an unusually high proportion — approximately 25 percent — of the current population, and yield a strong influence on U.S. issues and policies. As a result, concerns such as health care, improved fitness and sustaining the quality of life for the elderly suddenly take on a renewed focus. The spotlight turns to the health care field, and particularly the nursing profession, for solutions.

Unfortunately, the U.S. health care workforce is “too small and woefully unprepared” to meet the geriatric care needs of aging baby boomers, according to a recent report by the Institute of Medicine.

Oakland University's School of Nursing (SON), under the leadership of Dean Linda Thompson Adams, fully recognizes this national dilemma and is directly addressing related issues by focusing its educational programming, research and community outreach programs on this growing elderly population.

"As the baby boomers have moved from one demographic group to another, they have changed the way things are done," says Thompson Adams. "Now they live longer lives, often with chronic disease, and Oakland University nurses are uniquely prepared to care for them. It gives us an opportunity to distinguish our school as a center of excellence in geriatrics by providing advanced education in the area, endowing a professor specifically focused within the field and choosing the elderly population as our research focus."

#### **ADDRESSING NURSING SHORTAGE**

The need for quality care for the elderly is aggravated by a national nursing shortage. OU's answer to this deficiency is progressive growth. Enrollment at SON has tripled in the last five years due to expanded programming and collaborative partnerships with neighboring hospitals and long-term facilities that maximize training opportunities and enhance practices in the field.

"Substantial educational programs related to geriatrics are hard to sustain because many young students are not always interested in this field," explains Thompson Adams. "We feel strongly that our society needs professionals trained in this area, so we offer an adult and geriatric track to our MSN program. (See related article page 16) It's unique because it offers both options, and this opportunity attracts many more students."

#### **FACULTY SHARES THEIR PASSION**

OU's highly distinguished faculty members energetically share their passion for improving care for the elderly with their students and others in the nursing profession. For example, Ann Whall, a well-known researcher and expert in the gerontological field, has become an OU distinguished visiting professor through the school's new endowed chair in geriatrics. (See related article page 14)

"Across the nation nursing programs related to geriatrics are closing, at a time when the elderly population is burgeoning," Whall says. "I'm delighted OU has the support and vision to help stem the tide of student shortages and reduced faculty retention."

*The national nursing shortage will impact the ability to care for the elderly.*



*The geriatric care needs of aging baby boomers will increase dramatically in the coming years.*

Whall is one of several OU faculty members who joined forces on OU's Gerontological Nursing Committee. Whall, along with assistant professors Barbara Harrison, Cheryl Riley-Doucet, and Carrie Lynn Motyka and associate professor, Karen Dunn, formed the committee to share research and presentation efforts, and develop new initiatives and programming for the SON. They also brainstorm and help execute initiatives, such as research projects in partnership with Beaumont Hospital and exchange programs with nursing students in Korea and Northern Ireland.

"We've all heard the phrase, 'the sum is greater than its parts.' That concept really works here," says Whall. "Through this committee and other endowed efforts, OU has been able to attract gerontological researchers and modify programs to enroll large numbers of nurses interested in the field. This is a giant leap forward."

#### **BUILDING A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE**

SON research and other endeavors all share a common denominator – the goal of making a difference in the lives of the elderly. Large projects have included investigating the impact of multi-sensory environments on dementia and using visual cues to trigger memory in patients with Alzheimer's Disease. (See related article page 8)

"Much of our research focuses on specific ways to stimulate the brain and help recover memory," Thompson Adams says. "We have a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the science of nursing."

OU research opportunities allow students to expand their knowledge and focus on specific interests. Through research, Marisa Ferrari, a SON graduate currently working on her doctorate and serving as a visiting professor, learned “how to take data and use it as a tool to change policies and procedures to benefit patients.”

“As a staff nurse, you often see data gathering as another process or another form you have to fill out. It’s wonderful to be so involved in the research that you can see how data gathering and analysis can lead to positive changes that will benefit your patients,” Ferrari says.

Ferrari worked on a retrospective study in cooperation with William Beaumont Hospital which examined the relationship between impulsivity and falls in the hospital environment. The next step will lead to prevention. A grant-supported project, chaired by Whall, will provide information to nurses about patients who are prone to impulsivity, and therefore prone to falls.

#### IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Ultimately, a top priority for SON is improving the quality of life for the elderly, whether they suffer from chronic illness or need to make some changes to lead a healthy, active life.

Recently, SON received congressional support to open a nurse-managed, pre-symptom clinic for older adults. The clinic will assess patients’ activity levels and identify risk factors and pre-symptoms. Patients will receive a current profile and a plan for healthy living, including advice on nutrition, vitamins and exercise.



“Just as we help develop children in healthy ways, we can provide the same assistance for this older aged group,” the dean adds. “They’re entering a new stage of life, and with it comes a need to make changes to help them lead healthy, active lives.”

“We must do all we can for this population,” says Maggie Allesee, OU’s generous supporter who endowed the geriatric chair, and holds a post-masters in Gerontology from Wayne State University. “Politically, services for the elderly are the first to get cut, even though this population is growing at such a fast rate. I appreciate how progressive the SON, under


the leadership of Dean Adams, has become in this area. It’s inspiring to work with Professor Ann Whall and the committee of gerontological nursing faculty who share my passions and understand the importance of the quality of life for the elderly.” ■

*Karen Hildebrandt is a freelance writer from Pleasant Ridge, Mich.*

*Improved fitness and quality of life is an important focus of geriatric care.*







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status. She is also a Robert Wood Johnson  
Executive Nurse Fellow.*

# improving state of mind

*Recognized new investigator improves state of mind for dementia/Alzheimer patients*

*By Karen Hildebrandt*

People are so in tune to their surroundings that environmental stimuli can play a positive role in improving their behavior. This isn't an assumption. Research in Germany and the United Kingdom has proven the correlation. Cheryl Riley-Doucet, researcher and assistant professor at Oakland University's School of Nursing (SON), was intrigued with the evidence, but her decision to explore the benefits of multi-sensory environments within the elderly population may have been more personal in nature. The research, which earned her the New Investigator Award by the Midwest Nursing Research Society, was seeded by her experiences as a family therapist working within the mental health field.

"I have personally observed and experienced that a pleasing environment can provide elderly patients suffering from chronic disease with a better state of mind. If they're in a bad environment, behavior related to dementia and Alzheimer's will get worse. In a good and supportive environment, behavior will improve," she says.

## TRANSLATING MULTI-SENSORY ENVIRONMENT FINDINGS

Riley-Doucet came to OU six years ago eager to expand on the research in Europe and the U.K. indicating multi-sensory environments, which when provided stimuli of all five senses simultaneously, can improve behavior, and reduce restlessness and anxiety in elderly patients. "These results have been very promising but very little has been translated across the water," she says. "We have very few multi-sensory rooms scattered in elderly facilities around the country and often they are not properly used.

"I was very curious as to whether we could bring the multi-sensory environment concept into the home and help not only patients, but bring some support to the home caregiver," she adds. She got to work immediately and developed a primitive portable

multi-sensory kit which uses lights, scented oils, music and soft fabrics to stimulate the senses in a positive way. A team



*A sensing unit detects early signs of stress.*

of OU students helped her teach caregivers how to use it and then conducted an in-home trial, investigating how long and how frequently this treatment should be used with the elderly. That was two years ago. Since then, she has presented and written her findings, which are expected to be published soon.

## COLLABORATION CREATES USER-FRIENDLY DEVICE

Taking the research a step further, she enlisted the help of OU's School of Engineering and

Computer Science to make the kit more portable and less cumbersome. The collaborative effort, sparked by OU's Summer Institute for Bio-Engineering and Health Informatics (SIBHI), resulted in an adorable white stuffed whale prototype called Portable Autonomous Multi-sensory Intervention Device (PAMID). On the surface PAMID seems like any child's soft, cuddly stuffed companion but the user-friendly device holds blinking fiber optic lighting, an MP3 player with calming music, aroma therapy, and of course, a soft touch. In addition, PAMID contains a sensing unit that can detect early signs of stress in patients and autonomically trigger the sensory stimulation to activate.

Riley-Doucet was impressed, but not surprised, by the success of the engineering collaboration. "Because OU is a smaller university, with excellent resources and faculty, I was able to collaborate with engineering. I don't know if that type of teamwork among schools would be possible in a larger university," she says. "Ever since I arrived at OU, everyone has been so supportive, including Dean Thompson Adams, the grants office, my research group with the other faculty members and our wonderful contributors, like former SON Dean Justine Speers and Maggie Allesee."





*Cheryl Riley-Doucet, assistant professor, SON, and co-investigator Debatosh Debnath, assistant professor of engineering, with the PAMID.*



*The user-friendly device holds blinking fiber optic lighting, an MP3 player, aroma therapy as well as a sensing unit that detects a patient's stress and triggers the stimulation.*

#### **FOCUSING ON THE CAREGIVER NEEDS**

After the PAMID prototype, Riley-Doucet and her co-investigator, Debatosh Debnath, assistant professor of engineering, wanted to test PAMID on healthy subjects. They asked healthy students to wear a chest monitor that contained PAMID's sensing unit and play a stress provoking computer game in order to test the automatic triggers within PAMID. It worked. When students became anxious, the stress activated PAMID.

"We were very happy with the results," she says. "It means a caregiver does not always have to be in close proximity to the patient to use the multi-sensory environment, and PAMID also serves as an alarm to the caregiver when the patient is in a stress state."

Her next steps? "I'm trying to find grant sources so we can get PAMID packaged nicely and get some significant results from additional clinical trials," she says. "I want to see this treatment become a part of the normal work day for caregivers. Right now, few are familiar with the treatment and those who are consider it extra work — a burden. In reality, this treatment could dramatically reduce dementia

and Alzheimer's episodes, which would reduce a caregiver's burden."

#### **A PASSION FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE**

Riley-Doucet's commitment to her multi-sensory environment research won't end there. "My focus is on geriatrics right now but I hope to grow the scope of the multi-sensory environment to broader populations, such as brain injury patients."

Her compassion has driven her research. "Very little research has been done with elderly patients. Visit any nursing home and you often see them sitting for hours looking at a wall. Providing this therapy will give them another option.

"It may be like throwing a starfish that has been washed up on shore back into the sea, but it is better than nothing. For me, the greatest joy would be knowing that I have contributed even a small thing toward improving the quality of life for patients with dementia and their caregivers." ■

*Karen Hildebrandt is a freelance writer from Pleasant Ridge, Mich.*

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A P A S S I O N   *f o r*   H E A L I N G

# filling society's gaps

Visionary champion provides the guidance – and means –  
to find progressive solutions for the aged

*By Karen Hildebrandt*



*Maggie Allesee  
talks with Linda  
Thompson Adams,  
dean, OU School  
of Nursing*

**M**aggie Allesee has certain expectations of her community. So when she discovers an essential need not being fulfilled, she rallies a team of volunteers together and puts all of her vigor and enthusiasm to work to fill the void. This community-minded philanthropist, 80 years young, wants to improve the quality of life for the elderly population and believes society hasn't done enough to step up to the task.

"I was pushing people to improve conditions for the elderly in the 80s, when it wasn't so popular," Allesee recalls. "I realized there were thousands of people who were living longer, but not necessarily happier, lives. Everyone used to work until 65 and die at 75. Now they are living with chronic disease and running out of money by 80. Someone has to take care of these people. Our society is not prepared for this."

#### **A CHAMPION FOR GERIATRICS AND MORE**

Allesee found a caring community within OU's School of Nursing (SON). With her financial support, energy and aptitude for making a difference, she has established an endowed chair, a master's program in gerontology, and championed SON's increased focus on geriatric research, education and nursing practices.

"I got involved with SON more than 20 years ago because I was impressed with the school and the community support behind its programs," she says.

As a founding member of the SON Board of Visitors, Maggie Allesee helped launch the Nightingale Awards for Nursing® and many other fundraising efforts. "Back in those days with no resources and no staff members to help, we passed the hat to offer one \$500 award to the outstanding nurse of the year," she says. Now, the event generates \$100,000 annually to support scholarships, research and state-of-the-art equipment.

She continues to serve on the SON board, as well as the boards of the OU Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, the Meadow Brook Theatre and the OU President's Campaign Council.

"Maggie is more than a major donor," says SON Dean Linda Thompson Adams. "She is a pioneer and visionary who provided us with guidance on how to distinguish ourselves as a school positioned to face the issues of the aged with progressive solutions. She is so vibrant and involved in so many aspects of life, she is a true role model of how senior citizens can thrive and remain vital."

#### **CONNECTION TO ELDERLY SPANS LIFETIME**

Outside of OU, Allesee supports health- and education-related projects and institutions, including funding a \$3 million endowment for Hospice of Michigan's Maggie Allesee Center for Quality of Life and a \$2 million endowment to establish the Maggie Allesee Department of Dance at Wayne State University. Other major areas of



*I got involved with SON more than 20 years ago because I was impressed with the school and the community support behind its programs.*

MAGGIE ALLESEE

support include the Michigan Opera Theatre, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Cranbrook Institutes, Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts, Florida State University and Artrain.

A retired teacher and journalist, she became interested in the elderly while taking master's classes in education at Wayne. She became so concerned about senior issues she later earned a post-master's in Gerontology. Her special connection to the aged population began much earlier, however. As a child growing up in Florida, she lived among many active seniors, including her grandparents. She watched her grandfather build a new home at age 95 while her grandmother continued to operate a hotel into her old age.

She also connected with the elderly when she joined the Birmingham Junior League chorus in 1969 and began singing at nursing homes throughout Oakland County. She continues that tradition today.

"I croak a bit but they don't care. They love it when we sing 'Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.' Caregivers have told us we have gotten people to smile and get peppy when they don't even normally look up or respond to anyone."

#### **PART OF VITAL, GIVING COMMUNITY**

When asked how she does it all, she casually replies, "I don't get much sleep." Allesee juggles 90 monthly commitments, packing in at least three meetings and/or events per day. After her busy day is done, she spends every evening preparing board meeting materials which she passes on to her full-time secretary the next morning.

"One of the best parts of volunteering is working with wonderful staff and workers. My closest friends are volunteers and we share ideas and time carrying them out. I believe there are more volunteers in the Metro Detroit area helping charities than any other place in America. This is a very giving community filled with wonderful donors. I don't intend to stop anytime soon," she says.

"There are a lot of people who volunteer and sit on boards, but not many people who stick with organizations as long as I do. I think it's more rewarding to stay around long enough to watch them grow. OU is pro-growth from the president on down and that is invigorating. There's nothing complacent about SON. They're progressive in every way." ■

*Karen Hildebrandt is a freelance writer from Pleasant Ridge, Mich.*



*Ann Whall, visiting professor, OU School of Nursing.*

# dedicated to research on aging

*Allesee Endowed Chair in Gerontology is dedicated to research that improves care for frail and vulnerable older adults*

*By Susan Thwing-McHale*

In the U.S. today, about one in every eight Americans is 65 years or older, according to the Department of Health's Administration on Aging. By 2030, there will be about 71.5 million older persons, more than twice their number in 2000.

As the population ages, and people live well into their 80s and 90s, the work being done by Oakland University Visiting Professor Ann Whall is of utmost importance. Whall, who was appointed by the School of Nursing as the Allesee Endowed Chair in Gerontology in 2005, focuses her research on improving the care given to frail and vulnerable older Americans within the health care system.

The Allesee Endowed Chair, one of only two endowed chairs at Oakland, was established through a gift from Maggie Allesee, a School of Nursing Board of Visitors member and a longtime Oakland benefactor (*see related article page 12*). Through her involvement with Oakland, Allesee became aware of Whall's work with elders and her identification as one of the foremost experts in gerontological nursing.

"Ann Whall's distinguished and extensive expertise in gerontological nursing, and the nursing profession in general, is a significant and noteworthy addition to the academic program at Oakland," says Linda Thompson Adams, dean of the School of Nursing. "We are so pleased



*The bulk of Whall's research has focused on improving the care given to dementia patients.*

that she is able to share this wealth of experience with our students and faculty."

Trained in public health nursing, with graduate, post-graduate and post-doctoral education in gero-mental health, Whall has dedicated more than 20 years to research, mentoring and teaching focused upon improved care to frail and vulnerable elders in hospitals and nursing homes. Throughout her career she designed and led more than 25 funded studies, representing well over \$3 million in funding.

Whall began her research career focused upon the early prevention of Tardive Dyskinesia (a movement disorder related to psychotropic drugs) that disproportionately affects older persons. The bulk of her research, however, has focused upon improving the care given to dementia patients, including those who exhibit aggressive behavior in the later stages of this disease.

Currently working with nursing and medical staff at William Beaumont Hospital-Royal Oak, she has conducted studies to identify older persons at risk for falls during hospitalization. Funded by both the Maggie Allesee Endowment and the Oakland University/ William Beaumont initiative, the first part of the study was retrospective in nature and evaluated multiple aspects of falls that previously occurred in hospitalized patients age 65 years and older.

"We found that 28 percent of falls were related to some level of cognitive impairment, increased impulsivity and impaired judgment," Whall says. "The second portion of the study is devoted to designing a protocol for older persons at risk for falls due to such impulsivity. Study results will be used to identify means to decrease these risks in ways more appropriate and cost-effective than 'sitters' alone."

"Older adults are more frequently hospitalized than younger persons and the joint effect of medications and treatments, plus a foreign environment, often leads to confusion," she explains. "There is, therefore, a greater risk for falls in this population. Any injury, such as a fall, can lead to extended hospital stays and additional cognitive loss and physical incapacity."

The second portion of this study concludes in March 2009.

The research is being conducted in collaboration with Barbara Harrison, assistant professor of Nursing at OU; Cathy Campbell, director of Nursing Scholarship, Education and Quality at Beaumont Hospitals; Hyojeong Kim, study statistician; and Michael Maddens, M.D., chief of medicine



*Throughout her career, Ann Whall has led more than 25 funded studies that focus on elder care representing more than \$3 million in funding.*

and former chief of Gerontology at Beaumont Hospitals. The research is funded by the William Beaumont Health Systems/Oakland University initiative, and the Maggie Allesee gerontological endowment, with additional support from the Dr. Justine Speer Endowment funds.

Throughout her career, Whall has received numerous accolades for her work. In 2003, she received the Doris Schwartz Award for "Visionary and Exemplary Contributions to Geriatric Nursing" from the Gerontological Society of America. In 1995, she was named Alumni of the Year by the College of Nursing, Wayne State University. Whall has received two awards from Oakland University; in 1989, she received the first Research Recognition award at the School of Nursing Annual Nightingale® Celebration, and in 2006, she received the Oakland University Trustees Award for Academic Achievement.

Whall has also received two international awards as a Fulbright Distinguished Visiting Scholar to Great Britain/ Northern Ireland. She has since traveled to Northern Ireland with groups of Oakland University nursing students to experience that country's attempts to personalize their health care for older adults. ■

*Susan Thwing-McHale is on staff at Oakland University.*



# serving nurses and society

*Adult/gerontology degree serves nurses and society*

*By Karen Hildebrandt*

University students make some of the toughest choices of their lives during their college years. That is why Oakland University believes in providing options — clearly-defined, career-focused options supported by faculty and closely aligned with a student's lifestyle and goals.

OU's School of Nursing's (SON) newly established Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Adult/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner degree is all about options. This nurse practitioner track allows students to focus on advanced nursing care for either adults or the geriatric population. Students who wish to earn a dual national certification can do so by completing additional clinical hours focused in gerontology which would allow them to sit for both the adult and gerontology certification exams.

"Our new adult/gerontology degree gives students an opportunity to broaden their education," explains SON Assistant Professor Barbara Harrison. "This specialty was designed to meet the needs of students who prefer more experience with older populations. Nurses who select this specialty option often have clinical experiences in ambulatory settings, hospitals and extended care facilities where they have come to recognize the need for advanced nursing care for this growing population."

That need is great, which is why OU's option makes sense in today's nursing care environment. Older adults represent 46 percent of all hospital stays, 80 percent of homecare visits and 90 percent of long-term care residents, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. And yet, only three percent of all advanced practice nurses (certified nurse specialists — CNS and nurse practitioners - NPs), are certified in geriatric nursing, according to the American Nurses Credentialing Center (AACN).

The new program also helps OU address the critical shortage of geriatric nursing faculty in the United States. AACN statistics indicate that one quarter of nursing programs in this country lack any gerontological faculty members.



*Barbara Harrison, assistant professor, OU School of Nursing*

## STUDENT-CENTERED FOR SUCCESS

The adult/gerontology program provides choice in clinical experience, as well. Through strong partnerships with all the major hospitals and clinics in the area, OU can provide placements in many different settings. Students are encouraged to choose

a placement well-matched to their skills, strengths and career interests.

"Our strength is that we are student centered," Harrison says. "Students are encouraged to choose a clinical site to suit their interests. Many other schools have pre-set lists, leaving little choice for students. At SON, we treat them as adult learners invested in their future. We want them to take an active role, but we also guide them in this decision. They must explain in writing how their choices match their goals. The SON faculty also visits students in the field to evaluate if the choice truly is the best placement for the student."

Learning is achieved in multiple ways within this "hybrid" track which fuses online courses, clinical experience, role playing and simulation exercises. Many classes are offered online, but students visit campus to role play with "patients" suffering from common ailments and work with a high-tech simulator that provides realistic patient care scenarios.

"As students move along in the program, they must do clinical experience two days a week, plus the online courses. To do traditional coursework in the classroom can become redundant. We prefer to provide more interactive classroom experiences, which will allow students to practice geriatric skills they may not have received in

their clinical placements," Harrison says. "We have people visit and pretend to have an ailment so the students can practice good nursing skills. Simulators, like SimMan, also give them experience with the diagnosis and treatment of common complaints."

#### **A PROGRAM THAT WORKS**

Providing options seems to work for OU and its students.

"The adult/gerontological track made me more marketable and gave me more flexibility in choosing my career interest," says Lynn Etters, a geriatric nurse practitioner at the Detroit Medical Center-Huron Valley-Sinai Hospital-Krieger Geriatric Center. Etters, who graduated in April 2007, completed a dual major, focusing on both the adult and gerontological populations. "While my main interest is in geriatrics, the adult certification allows me to work in other areas if I choose to change my focus," she adds.

With only two graduating classes under its belt, SON's new adult/gerontological track has already achieved great success. With a 100 percent pass rate, the graduating classes have earned a mean score on the National Certification Exam higher than the national mean. ■

*Karen Hildebrandt is a freelance writer from Pleasant Ridge, Mich.*



*During campus visits, MSN students role play with geriatric "patients."*



*The student-centered program allows students to choose a clinical site to suit their interests.*

*"Through the years, people have gone through the city's system from program to program ... remaining unemployed. What we've done is remove the barrier to employment."*

TOM SCHUMANN

executive director for OU's Center of Nursing Education



*Students arrive for classes at the new Health Care Career Center in Detroit.*

# booster shot

*School of Nursing teams up with Detroit Medical Center to give community a lift*  
By Mary Gunderson-Switzer



Like a shot in the arm to an ailing economy, OU's School of Nursing, Detroit Medical Center and Detroit's Workforce Development Department are providing job relief in the community.

Combining their health care expertise, opportunity knocked — and the allies opened doors to the new Health Care Career Center in Detroit.

Opening last fall, the center was designed to promote health care jobs specifically for Detroit residents who are unemployed and underemployed — turning dreams into reality. Of extra importance for Detroit, the center is like a dose of medicine for displaced autoworkers.

The center offers certified instruction and training for four high-demand health care careers: certified nurse assistant, patient care attendant, certified medical administrative assistant and licensed practical nurse (LPN). Participants also benefit from valuable on-the-job clinical training in area Detroit Medical Center hospitals and long-term health facilities.

Housed in a 20,000-square-foot "suite of services" on the fourth floor of a building near Detroit's Cobo Hall, the center's programs are comprehensive. Like a "one-stop-career-shop," everything needed is provided in one place — all the way down to the nursing shoes.

"Through the years, people have gone through the city's system, from program to program...remaining unemployed," says Tom Schumann, executive director for OU's Center of Nursing Education. "What we've done is remove the barriers to employment."

## CHANGING COURSE

While covering tuition and course material costs, the center offers additional student support — career coaches, computer labs (for educational purposes and resume-building skills), on-site child care, free bus passes to the center and a weekly stipend for other expenses.

The center's programs prepare students for the real world. While one room in the center replicates a doctor's waiting room, another is set up like a hospital room (equipped

with mannequins and high-tech simulators for practical experience).

"The simulators are a great tool to reinforce nursing skills that prepare students for the actual jobs," Schumann says.

The saying "80 percent of success is showing up" rings true.

"What's been really exciting is how well the participants have responded to the program," Schumann says. "They realize we are making an investment in them, and they are taking it seriously and showing up to perform."

Students are not only showing up when expected, but also on extra weekdays and weekends. A recent computer basics class was offered during a time when the university was closed — yet the room was packed with students eager to learn. Instructors hold optional study sessions each weekend, which are met with a full audience of students.

About 200 have enrolled in the center's programs. Three program participants share their success stories:

## VIRUS PROTECTION

Once a freelance Web site designer offering in-home technical support, Zuwarah Jahi has moved from computer viruses to human viruses.

Regularly reading stacks of health magazines and loading up only the healthiest foods in his grocery cart, Jahi's interest in health led him to the center.

It's been a great fit. Jahi appreciates the center's interdisciplinary approach and has big plans for the future.

After completing the program's LPN requirements, Jahi will use his nursing skills in the community. A few years down the road, he'd like to transport his nursing skills to underserved areas in Brazil, China and Australia.

"The planet is big, and there's always someone to help wherever you go," Jahi says.

He's well on his way.

### SWITCHING GEARS

After a 14-year career in the automobile industry, Cheryl Capers accepted a buyout from American Axle and enrolled in the center's LPN program.

"I wanted to make a good living and help people out at the same time," Capers says. "The career center offers a new beginning for people."

After completing clinical requirements at the Children's Hospital of Michigan, Capers will participate in a labor/delivery clinic at Hutzel Women's Hospital.

Currently a nursing assistant at an adult care facility, Capers hopes to eventually become a registered nurse (RN) caring for children on kidney dialysis.

Asked about her future plans, she responds with practicality and humor: "Well, right now I have a lot of papers to write."

### SURGICAL ASSIST

Demetria Boyd's childhood dream of being a nurse is coming true. Currently taking LPN classes, she hopes to pursue a career as an RN specializing in surgery.

After years of raising her daughter, Boyd describes student life as a challenge. "The biggest obstacle was just getting back in school, learning how to study, and how to recall information when needed," she says.

Along with tutoring services and access to the center's computer lab after-hours, the center's students can phone their instructors for help.



*Students are eager to learn and gain skills for high-demand health care careers.*

"They go way out of their way to help," Boyd says. "It's really a blessing that a program like this exists in the city."

After finishing her LPN training, Boyd plans to apply to the BSN program at OU's School of Nursing.

"Paging Nurse Boyd to surgery" may soon be a reality.

### SUITE DREAMS

The center's suite of services is growing. Plans include new programs for insurance coding and emergency medical services.

While expanding, the staff has been proactive in anticipating needs for additional help in reading, writing and math. Goodwill Industries has moved into the building's second floor to provide any necessary remedial instruction.

So far, the biggest problem at the center is the waiting list. The center's administrators are already discussing developing another center for Oakland County.

"We're excited about becoming a model within the state," says Linda Thompson Adams, dean, OU's School of Nursing. "Others see what we're doing...and we want to do all we can to help others replicate it elsewhere." ■

*Mary Gunderson-Switzer is a freelance writer from Warner Robins, Ga.*





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# gaining confidence

*Simulation labs solve important patient care questions*

*By Alice Rhein*

"Mr. Grizzly," the very pregnant "Noelle," baby "Cubby" and 7-year-old "Buddy" could be the typical American family if it weren't for the fact that they suffer extreme health conditions and die several times a year.

For students in Oakland University's School of Nursing (SON) program, this high-tech, high-touch foursome is an integral part of their education, according to Patricia Ketcham, MSN '88, RN, director of OU's Nursing Laboratories.

Some college nursing programs use simulation mannequins as mere task trainers. OU's simulation program, which includes SimMan, Noelle, SimBaby and PediaSim (the official manufacturers' names) takes it a giant step further.

At OU, faculty teaching at all levels are actively involved in the program and engaging students with scenarios that stimulate knowledge and critical thinking and support clinical competence. This is supported by an enthusiastic simulation committee comprised of Ketcham; Dawn Baker, visiting instructor; Meghan Harris, assistant professor; Barb Harrison, assistant professor; Gary Moore, associate professor; Linda Poly-Droulard, lecturer; and Laura Pittiglio, assistant professor.

## **GAINING CONFIDENCE**

In fact, a funded research project conducted by Harris found that students with simulation experience had significantly higher clinical grades compared to students without the experience. "The faculty reported that students with the simulation experience were more confident and better prepared for their clinical experience," says Harris.

"The OU faculty are committed to creating simulation experiences that move the student from just performing a skill or task to higher level thinking about the care of

the patient," says Ketcham, who has presented with Harris at international conferences about the program's effectiveness. "While the literature and conference sessions often highlight the difficulty of encouraging faculty to participate because it is new and the high fidelity scenarios are complicated and time-consuming to develop, the OU faculty members are meeting the challenge."

Arriane Dimuro, a second semester junior says working with SimBaby prior to her pediatric clinical helped prepare her for an onslaught of RSV cases that later emerged in her clinical rotation. "I felt much more confident after working with SimBaby. One of the faculty members pretends to be the mom, so you have to interact with the baby and the mom. If I didn't do well in the simulation, it made me think about it so I'd know what to do better," says Dimuro.

Christine Bates, also a second semester junior and a former medical tech in the Air Force Reserves, got a prelude to her OB/GYN rotation through Noelle, the birthing simulation mannequin. "There's no pressure in asking questions during the simulation," she says. "Our instructor would show us what to expect, and once we were in the OB clinical, you could see she was so right."

## **FACULTY CREATE PROGRAM SIMULATION SCENARIOS**

A SON staff simulation programmer develops programs with the faculty so the mannequins will respond in certain ways based on the interaction with students. While there are many scenarios in pre-programmed software, the programmer develops specific ones where "patients" can have different responses based on faculty and student needs.



*This high-tech, high-touch foursome makes up the family in the simulation lab in OU's School of Nursing.*



*Birth simulation provided Lindsay Small, a recent SON graduate, with valuable experience that rounded out her education.*





*OU faculty are committed to creating simulation experiences that move students through performing a task to thinking about the care of the patient.*

"If I see students getting complacent I can change things, raise the blood pressure, make the baby cry or have stridor," says Ketcham. "Even turn him blue."

"Mr. Grizzly," an older adult Sim affectionately named after OU's mascot, can teach students about wound care, IV administration, catheter insertion and a host of other procedures.

"What's nice is that faculty can build their own programs based on their teaching style," says Pittiglio, who set up a scenario where students have to identify eight errors on the medical/surgical floor based on their interaction with Mr. Grizzly. "Some are very simple, like there was a syringe left in the bed, to something very complicated like the suction machine was put together backward."

Decreasing anxiety is one of the best outcomes that simulation provides. In this age of multi-media, students learn better in this stimulating environment.

#### **EXPANDING LESSONS IN A MULTIMEDIA WORLD**

To help perfect skills learned in the simulation lab, Harris and Pittiglio teamed with OU's School of Engineering and Computer Science (SECS) to develop a computer game that consists of a virtual hospital unit (Vi-MED) with a variety of patients for the nursing student player to care for during a typical shift.

SON and SECS also worked together last summer to develop a simulator for nasotracheal suctioning. "It was modeled after an IV simulator with an interactive computer, and it gave students a phenomenal experience with that technique," says Ketcham.

For OU's nursing students, getting the experience with simulation is invaluable.

"Everything the students talked about was baseline education, but they felt so much better," says Ketcham. "Simulation is a way to practice high-acuity, low frequency skills and make sure we are ready for those events. We can also practice the frequent events and know that our students can do those safely." ■

*Alice Rhein is a freelance writer from Huntington Woods, Mich.*

*SimBaby scenarios, with a faculty member acting as mom, give students the skills to interact with both patient and parent.*





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# good to great

*Online RN to BSN program  
helps meet demand for better educated nurses  
By Sandra Beckwith*



The demand for nurses with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree continues to rise as colleges hire more nurse educators with advanced degrees, hospitals seek “magnet status” and need better-educated nurses to achieve that designation, and treatment for more complex diseases requires superior critical-thinking skills.

Oakland University’s RN to BSN degree program responds to the demand with an online curriculum that allows students to study at their own pace without the restrictions of scheduled classroom time. The program has at least 150 students enrolled and learning at any given time.

“One of the barriers for associate-degreed nurses who want to go back to school is that hospital schedules are planned so far in advance that it’s hard for nurses to get time off to attend classes,” says Diane Norris, associate dean for the School of Nursing. “With the online format, they can take classes when it’s convenient without worrying about juggling course meeting times with their work schedules.”

The program combines general education in the humanities and the social, biological and natural sciences with education in the theory and practice of nursing. It is designed to develop the critical thinking, communication and clinical skills needed for today’s complicated health care environment.

#### IMPROVING OUTCOMES

The value of those skills is reflected in research revealing that hospitalized patients cared for by nurses with more education have lower morbidity and mortality rates. The University of Pennsylvania’s Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research reports that a 10-percent increase in the proportion of nurses with BSN degrees decreases the risk of patient death by 5 percent.

“The goal of a BSN degree is to help move practicing RNs to the next level and prepare new nurses to provide the best care possible to patients,” explains Suzanne Begeny, director of government affairs for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.



*Kathleen Young earned her BSN before joining the U.S. Army.*

#### GOOD TO GREAT

Kathleen Young hopes to use her recent OU BSN degree to provide that top quality care in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps.

“My OU BSN degree got me active duty in the Army,” says Young, 48, who was ready for a new challenge after 23 years as a nurse. “The Army has one of the best graduate programs in nurse anesthesia in the country.



I hope to use what I learn to serve my country by caring for soldiers.” Nurse anesthetists are often the sole providers of anesthesia in many military circumstances and provide nearly 100 percent of the anesthesia in rural American hospitals in some states.

“It’s an awesome thing,” Young says.

“Continued education with a BSN or advanced degree is a way to make really good nurses great,” says Kathleen Van Wagoner, chief nursing officer at Crittenton Hospital and Medical Center in Rochester, Mich. “Baccalaureate prepared nurses have more exposure to general education and more time in nursing science in order to understand why we learn the things we do.”

Begeny says the general education exposure, which includes coursework in the humanities, sciences and mathematics, helps prepare nurses for the multi-cultural, social and ethical issues they will face in today’s health care environment. Nurses with baccalaureate-level preparation recognize the importance of a broader education and are much more likely to pursue the advanced degrees needed to teach.

*The goal of a BSN degree is to help move practicing RNs to the next level and prepare new nurses to provide the best care possible to patients.*

#### SUZANNE BEGENY

director of government affairs for the American Association of Colleges of Nursing

#### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

“There are faculty positions available in higher education, but without a BSN, you cannot obtain your master’s or doctoral degree. Those with associate degrees who want to teach eventually will need to complete the baccalaureate content,” Begeny notes.

Teaching is a particularly appealing option for nurses who have been providing hands-on care for many years and are ready for a transition. “When nurses are at the mid-career stage, they often feel that the physical demands of nursing begin to take their toll, and they look for opportunities as a nurse educator or manager. Most of those positions require a minimum of a bachelor’s degree,” she says. ■

*Sandra Beckwith is a freelance writer from Fairport, N.Y.*



## Online RN to BSN program available to all

OU's online RN to BSN program provides RNs the opportunity to earn a BSN through an affordable, convenient program. The program offers all required degree completion sequence, non-nursing and general education courses for RNs online at in-state tuition rates.

This degree completion course sequence recognizes the RN's prior education and experience. Courses add value to this base and promote continued advancement in the profession. Because RNs are licensed and practicing in their field, the nursing course sequence includes only one non-traditional clinical course.

All required nursing courses are offered online each fall and winter term, while one course is offered each summer term. Non-nursing and general education required courses are offered online throughout the academic year.

Since students can set their own pace, the time to complete the program varies. However, the minimum time needed is two years, excluding summer. There is no mandatory time limit for degree completion.

For more information about admission requirements and transfer credits review the RN/BSN degree completion sequence booklet available on the OU SON Web site at [www2.oakland.edu/nursing/rnbsn.cfm](http://www2.oakland.edu/nursing/rnbsn.cfm)

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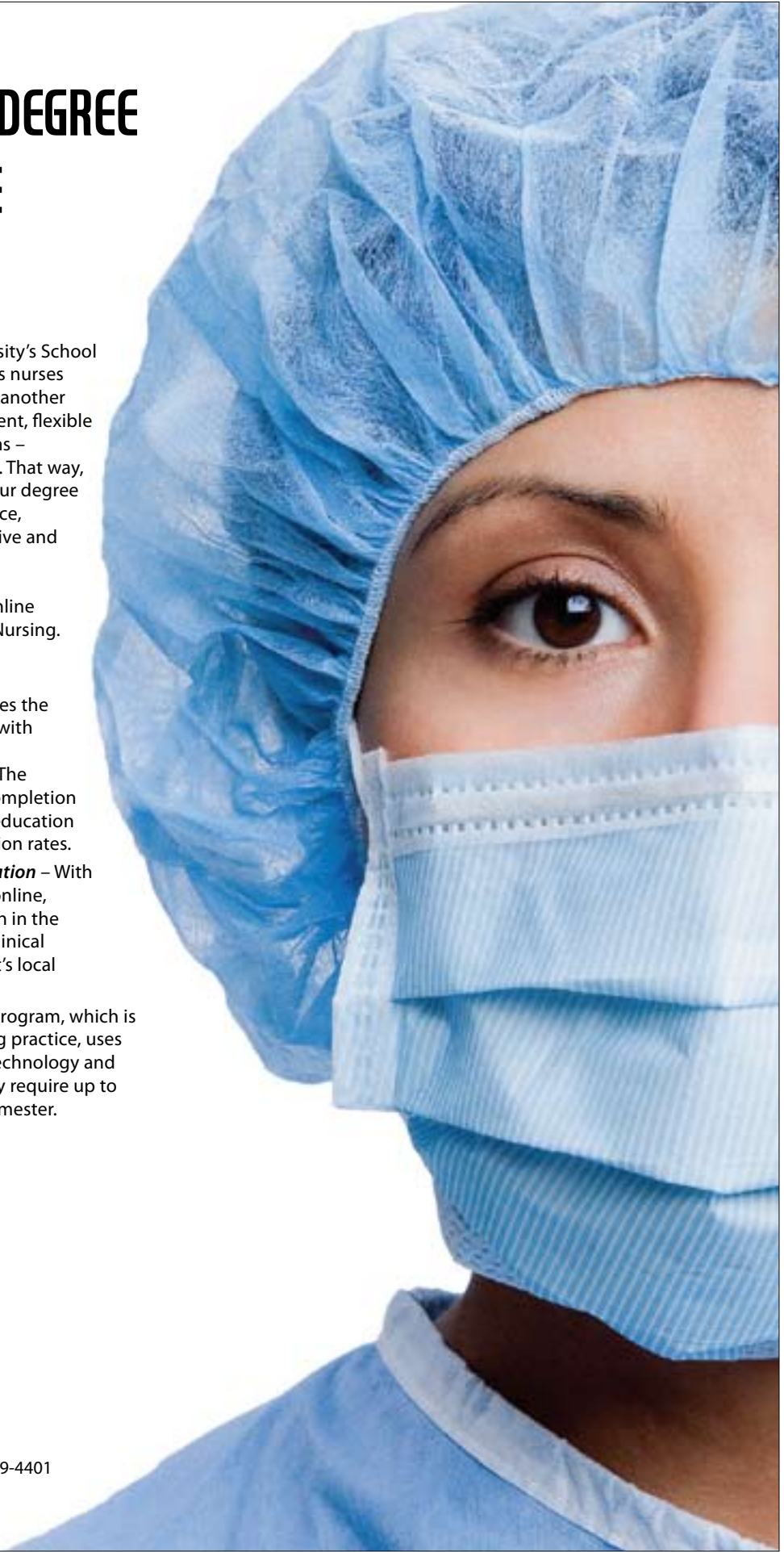
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# future focus

*Doctor of Nursing Practice degree prepares nurses  
to educate future workforce*

*By Alice Rhein*

**M**arisa Ferrari knew at age 10 that she wanted to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a nurse. As witness to a horrific car accident, Ferrari also observed as her mother provided emergency lifesaving care to an infant whose mother would later die from injuries sustained in the accident.

"I felt both admiration for my mother's skills and a devastating feeling of helplessness," says Ferrari, who completed her coursework in September and will graduate in December with a doctorate in nursing practice (DNP) from Oakland University.

Early in her nursing education, Ferrari recognized that teaching nurses was essential to the strength of the profession. Though a dedicated bedside practitioner, Ferrari has committed herself to educating future nurses, and she may be saving more lives than she'll ever know.

#### **ADDRESSING A POTENTIAL CRISIS**

Nationwide, 116,000 RNs are needed to fill vacant hospital positions, according to a recent report by the American Hospital Association and reported on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Web site. This

translates into a national RN vacancy rate of 8.1 percent, which additional reports indicate will lead to a shortage of 500,000 RNs by 2025 in the U.S. alone.

Yet according to AACN's report on 2007-2008 Enrollment and Graduations in Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs in Nursing, U.S. nursing schools turned away 40,285 qualified applicants from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs in 2007 due to insufficient number of faculty, clinical sites, classroom space, clinical preceptors and budget constraints. Almost three quarters of the nursing schools responding to the 2007 survey pointed to faculty shortages as a reason for not accepting all qualified applicants into entry-level nursing programs.

OU is trying to address these issues through accelerated programs and through the DNP, the highest level of preparation for clinical practice recognized by the AACN.

As an OU nursing professor, Ferrari teaches several courses as part of the university's online RN to BSN program and wanted to pursue the DNP to help her excel as a nurse and educator.





*The DNP will help Marisa Ferrari excel as a nurse and educator.*

"I am already able to use the information that I have learned in my daily practice. The courses have expanded my knowledge and advanced the way that I process information and troubleshoot problems," says Ferrari, who started a Ph.D. program at another university before transferring to OU for the DNP, which is the first of its kind in the state.

Program Director Frances Jackson emphasizes that this program is critical for training more nurse educators to fill the nursing shortage gaps as well as improve the overall quality of patient care. "This program will allow our graduates to function in leadership roles in the health care system, have increased ability to implement change in clinical settings and to do clinical teaching," she says.

#### **A FLEXIBLE PROGRAM FOR A FULL-TIME NURSE**

OU's DNP program, which can be completed in two years of full-time study, builds upon master's-

level content while providing doctoral-level courses in advanced research methods, theory, leadership, systems management and nursing informatics. "The program is ideal for those who work full time. Students in the program are completing it without difficulty," says Ferrari. "Most students work full time and take classes part time."



*Marisa Ferrari teaches online courses for OU's RN to BSN program.*

The 32-credit, 16-month accelerated program, introduced in fall of 2006, prepares nurses for positions as clinical professors in academic institutions, clinical leaders in health care systems, policy makers in government and entrepreneurs in the health care industry.

Jackson notes that courses use a combination of online and synchronous Web-based format leading to a culminating research project that can be implemented in a student's own hospital or work setting. For Ferrari, that means continuing her examination of the

relationship between impulsivity and falls in the hospital environment, a project she's been working on in cooperation with William Beaumont Hospital.

"The program flexibility is terrific and offers a great mix of online courses and face-to-face interaction. Anyone can do this program. It is structured in such a way that any full-time nurse with a million and two things going on can participate and succeed," says Ferrari.

"The faculty at OU will support you in every way."



#### PROGRAM EVOLVES WITH STUDENT INPUT

In fact, Ferrari is most impressed with how leadership has valued the input from doctoral students. "Each group of students that has been a part of the DNP program has altered it to some extent," she says. As examples, she points out that the program has evolved to include a travel course in Washington, D.C., and the nursing theory course, which was originally six weeks, was expanded to 14 weeks after students recognized the need for further study in this area.

OU's DNP program was made possible through its partnership with Northern Michigan University in Marquette and a grant from the Kellogg Foundation. Students reside all over the country, including Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Meetings for distance learners take place in Gaylord, Mich., and Lansing and via teleconferencing.

"With this program we're blending our faculty and our students so that those who are teaching and learning in an urban environment will be introduced to rural health care issues and vice versa," says Jackson. "The students will then be the ones who will go on to teach our future undergraduate and graduate nursing students." ■

*Alice Rhein is a freelance writer from Huntington Woods, Mich.*

## Requirements for DNP degree

Oakland University's School of Nursing offers a 32-credit post-master's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program. The DNP is the highest degree for clinical nursing practice. Students who had a clinical focus in their master's degree program will take the required 32 credits for the DNP. Students who did not have a clinical focus in their master's degree program will complete 32 credits of DNP coursework plus required courses to complete a post-master's certificate in one of OU's clinical nursing specialty areas. The program can be completed in two years of full-time study.



DNP courses use a combination of distance learning technology and limited classroom formats, which may require up to two face-to-face sessions during a semester, leading to a culminating research project that can be implemented in a student's own hospital or work

setting. Dates of attendance for courses which have some limited face to face meetings are publicized well in advance so students will have ample time to make arrangements to attend the required sessions. These sessions are not optional and cannot be replaced by other assignments.

#### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Compliance with Oakland University graduate study admission requirements
- Completion of a master's degree in nursing from an institution accredited by the National League for Nursing or the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education with a graduate cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 or above.
- Licensed as Registered Nurse in one of the 50 states or U.S. territories
- Have a minimum of one-year post-master's advanced practice clinical (includes nursing administration) experience
- Written goal statement
- Two letters of reference
- Compliance with required university policies regarding international student admission requirements (p.20-21 Graduate Catalog).

Required admission materials are available by calling (248) 370-4253, e-mailing [nrsinfo@oakland.edu](mailto:nrsinfo@oakland.edu), or visiting OU Web site at [www.oakland.edu/nursing](http://www.oakland.edu/nursing)



Leaders from Crittenton Hospital Medical Center and OU meet to form partnership. From left, Gary Russi, president, OU; Kathleen Van Wagoner, chief nursing officer, Crittenton; Lynn Orfgen, president and CEO, Crittenton; Linda Thompson Adams, dean, School of Nursing, OU; and Anthony Nehra, M.D., chairman, Crittenton Hospital Medical Center Foundation.

## Crittenton, OU establish endowed professorship in nursing to focus on leadership

Oakland University's School of Nursing kicked off a partnership with Crittenton Hospital Medical Center that focuses on creating leading, innovative programs that highlight the role of the nurse leader. The partnership is possible thanks to a \$2 million endowed professorship from the Rochester, Mich., hospital.

"They want to fund research and education to bring a renewed focus on caring and the critical leadership role nurses play in that," says Claudia Grobbel, MSN, RN, OU visiting instructor.

Under the leadership of Kathleen Van Wagoner, Crittenton's chief nursing officer, the patient care delivery model redesign will follow the Relationship Based Care (RBC) model. This method, based on the work of Marie Manthey and Mary Koloroutis, has at its core the desire to create a more patient-centered nursing approach in a clinical culture that fosters healthy relationships and ignites the meaning and joy in daily practice.

"Patients and their families must have confidence and trust in their nurses, so that nurses can help them overcome any potential impediments to their recovery," says Van Wagoner.

More than 50 sophomores applied for the 24 spots in the program, which will pair students with nursing mentors at Crittenton. All clinical assignments will be at Crittenton or its affiliates, so students will be educated in a consistent hospital environment.

An obvious goal is to entice students to accept nursing positions at Crittenton after graduation if it's deemed a good fit, but Grobbel says there is also an important research aspect to the program. Because more than 20 percent of nurses leave the profession, Grobbel wants to understand why this happens, and hopes that this program holds opportunities to evaluate career decisions long term.

Research surrounding the cultural changes and caring practices of the nursing staff toward patients and families is just beginning, and students for the fall term have already been chosen. The process included a caring abilities survey, an essay and team interviews by Crittenton's nursing leadership team.

## Envision Conference focuses on entrepreneurial role for nurses

Last year, the Envision Conference was the first of its kind offered by the OU School of Nursing and presenting sponsor, William Beaumont Hospitals. Nearly 120 nurse executives, nurses and entrepreneurs in the health care industry shared revolutionary ideas on how advanced technology, interdisciplinary partnerships and entrepreneurship are transforming nursing education and improving health care for all.

The 2008 Envision Conference, held in September at the Royal Park Hotel in Rochester, Mich., focused on the theme "Entrepreneurship in Nursing Leading to Change."



Louise Woerner

Keynote speaker Louise Woerner, chairman and president of Home Care of Rochester in Rochester, New York, presented her roles as an entrepreneur on home care nursing and how it is changing the way health care is being delivered. Nationally renowned speaker, consultant and leadership trainer Michael Wickett from Auburn Hills, Mich., spoke on his roles as an entrepreneur and how to become a leader in the nursing profession. Patricia Chiverton, professor for the University of Rochester's School of Nursing, discussed how to connect entrepreneurship to education in a university setting. Paul Santoro, president and CEO of Anesthesia Staffing Consultants, presented a case study of his business, including how he began his own company. Professor Joanne Chung from Polytechnic University School of Nursing in Hong Kong presented information on entrepreneurship in informatics. A highlight was the introduction of the philosophy and objectives of the Mobile Integrative Health Centre and its implications for health care delivery.

Paul Santoro



Joanne Chung



## ENVISION

ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN NURSING



In addition to William Beaumont Hospitals, sponsors included Brighton Hospital; HCR Cares of Rochester, New York; *Health Care Weekly Review*; Hospice of Michigan; Kelly Services; St. John Health System; and the United States Army.

A record number of participants, more than 230, learned about creative opportunities for nurses to engage in entrepreneurial solutions for practice, research and education. Attendees also learned about home health care delivery, how to build interdisciplinary leadership skills and take ideas and ambition to the entrepreneurial level, and how innovation and informatics are advancing the delivery of health care.

In addition to speakers, a poster session provided the opportunity for participants, including OU doctoral nursing students and nurses, to display their nursing-related abstracts. Information for the 2009 Envision Conference will be announced early in the winter. Watch for updated information on the conference Web site at [www2.oakland.edu/nursing/envisionconference](http://www2.oakland.edu/nursing/envisionconference).

Patricia Chiverton



Michael Wickett





*Nightingale® honorees pose for photo at the awards event in May.*

**The 20th Annual Nightingale Awards for Nursing® honored the following nurses:**

**ADMINISTRATION:**

**Winner** Denise Bertin-Epp, Brighton Hospital  
**Runner-up** Debra Ann Williams, Garden City Hospital

**ADVANCED PRACTICE:**

**Winner** Melanie Keiffer, Providence Hospital  
**Runner-up** Linda Schrettner Miller, Huron Valley Sinai Hospital

**EDUCATION/RESEARCH:**

**Winner** Nancy Gibbs, Detroit Receiving Hospital  
**Runner-up** Sue Kokko, William Beaumont Troy Hospital

**LONG TERM CARE/REHABILITATION:**

**Winner** Pamela Thomson, Garden City Hospital  
**Runner-up** Linda Yoder, Garden City Hospital

**NURSING IN THE COMMUNITY:**

**Winner** Susan Zacharski, Pontiac School District  
**Runner-up** Ameldia Brown, Henry Ford Macomb Hospital

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI:**

**Winner** Charlotte Mather, Genesys Regional Medical Center  
**Runner-up** Sheryl Cummings, Cancer & Leukemia Center

**STAFF PRACTICE:**

**Winner** Melissa Mayes, Huron Valley Sinai Hospital-Charach Cancer Center  
**Winner** Mary Ellen Zajac, Children's Hospital  
**Runner-up** Brigid McCabe, Providence Hospital  
**Runner-up** Jodi Radtke, Munson Medical Center

**PEOPLE'S CHOICE:**

**Winner** Jennifer Cassidy, Providence Hospital  
**Runner-up** Julia Gerdes, Henry Ford Hospital

**Nurses recognized at the 20th Annual Nightingale Awards for Nursing®**



For 20 years, Oakland University has recognized excellence in nursing through the annual Nightingale Awards®. This year's winners, chosen from a record 160 nominations, were honored in May.

WDIV-Local 4's morning news anchor, Rhonda Walker, emceed the event and spoke about her admiration of nurses, including her mother. More than 800 people attended the event.

Winners received a solid Nightingale® statue, pin and a check for \$1,000. Runners-up received a plaque and pin. For its 20th anniversary of celebrating nurses, the event saw record table and ticket sales. The Nightingale® committee also reported a 60-percent increase in silent auction sales. Proceeds support scholarships, research and related equipment.

The annual success of the event depends on a host of sponsors including Crittenton Hospital Medical Center, Detroit Medical Center, *Healthcare Weekly Review*, Henry Ford Health System, Kelly Services, Oakwood Healthcare, St. John Health System, St. Joseph Mercy Oakland and William Beaumont Hospitals.



## International opportunities change nursing students' outlook on culture and care



*SON Dean Linda Thompson Adams with Korean geriatric students.*

The emphasis on international opportunities in universities nationwide continues to rise as a result of globalization and the need to understand

other cultures. OU's School of Nursing (SON) offers students several international programs including a semester in Italy learning nursing research, clinical study in Ireland and an exchange program with Korean geriatric students.

Associate Professor Gary Moore has overseen the research semester in Padova, Italy, for three years and has seen its popularity grow. "Along with the content of the course, I want them to understand the health care system of a different culture," says Moore.

For nursing student Jessica Stephens, the time spent in an Italian hospital was an education in itself. "Looking at the technology there, it was ten years behind us, it seemed," she says. Yet, Moore notes that the Italian health system is government run, so no one is denied health care.

There are also few nursing homes, as older patients tend to be cared for by family. Doctors complete their degrees in

six years and access to medical records by computer is far simpler than in the U.S. because of less emphasis on patient privacy.

Moore notes that the objective of the nursing course is to understand the difference between nursing research and practice. The purpose of the workshop in Italy is to highlight commonalities and differences between the European and American health systems.

Ireland is the destination every other year for Distinguished Visiting Instructor Ann Whall, three undergraduate and three graduate students from OU and the University of Michigan. The focus is clinical-based and students look at the care of patients with dementia. For Assistant Professor Barbara Harrison a two-week introduction of visiting Korean geriatric students evolved into an exchange program. Last year, eight Korean students and their professor learned geriatric nursing practices while visiting several hospitals and assisted living centers. After their visit, Harrison brought several students to Korea last May in what may be the beginning of an annual exchange program.

"We want to offer as many study-abroad experiences as possible," says Moore. Allowing nursing students to experience health care in different cultures is one way for them to have a global edge when it comes to clinical practice and research.

## 'Camp RN' offers middle schoolers a peek into the profession

The shortage of nurses isn't due to a lack of applicants, notes Kristina White, OU academic adviser in the SON. It's because there is a shortage of qualified instructors to teach tomorrow's nurses. That was one of the reasons behind "Camp RN," a two-week day camp for seventh through ninth graders that began in 2006.

"The program is not just to introduce middle school students to nursing but also to give our nursing students the opportunity to teach and see nursing education as a whole other area to pursue," she says.

About 30 campers in each of two sessions follow a pre-college experience of five courses a day, including computer-based research, clinical calculations, nursing fundamentals, pharmacology and wellness.



*Camp RN participants work in SON simulation lab.*

Graduate students teach a dissection course and there's even nursing forensics with a mock crime scene investigation where campers learn how to type blood and lift fingerprints. Campers also learn about CPR, first aid, hand washing, respiration and how to take a pulse.

At the end of the week, the campers shadow nurses at William Beaumont Hospital in Troy and receive a hospital tour to see how all the various areas work to optimize patient care.

White says that the impetus behind Camp RN was to reach interested students at a younger age. "We found that some incoming freshmen didn't have the right high school courses. This is a way to reach them before high school and encourage the students to take the advanced math and science courses," she says.



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Denise Bertin-Epp  
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF NURSING OFFICER  
2008 Oakland University's School of Nursing  
Administration Nightingale Award Recipient

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